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 TO RUEHCA/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2950
 INFO RUEHAC/USINT BAGHDAD 102
 RUDDYR/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 438
 RUOMCU/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2038
 RUMJCK/AMEMBASSY DACCA 6789
 RUMJGM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 6210
 RUDKAR/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST 126
 RUOMHR/AMEMBASSY TEMPRAN 2536
 RUFHRS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 123
 RUKQBT/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 1106
 RUOMRA/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 422
 RUEHDT/US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 2700
 RUMJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1161
 RUSSLK/AMEMBASSY KAEUL 5971
 RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3107
 RUSSGD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 2450
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 S E C R E T NEW DELHI 17718

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E.O. 12065: GDS 9/27/85 (LEVIN, HERBERT) OR-P
 TAGS: PEPR AF US
 SUBJECT: (S) SOVIET INTENTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: A) STATE 250400 B) NEW DELHI 16994 (NOTAL)

1. S - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. POL COUNSELOR 27 SEPTEMBER SHARED APPROPRIATE
 PORTIONS REF A WITH MINISTRY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS JOINT
 SECRETARY A.R. DEO (EASTERN EUROPE INCLUDING
 YUGOSLAVIA). WE ALSO REQUESTED INDIAN GOVERNMENT
 VIEWS ON SOVIET INTENTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN, NOTING IT
 WOULD BE HELPFUL TO BE INFORMED OF ANY RECENT GOI-
 SOVIET DISCUSSIONS OF THIS SUBJECT.

3. DEO RESPONDED THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAD NOT
 OFFERED GOI ANY INFORMATION OR REASSURANCES ON SOVIET
 ACTIVITY AS REGARDS AFGHANISTAN. HOWEVER, DEO HAS
 BEEN INSURING THAT SUBJECT ARISES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH
 RUSSIANS. THESE HAVE PROCEEDED ALONG FOLLOWING LINES.

4. THE RUSSIANS WERE TOLD THAT GOI POLICY IS THAT
 AFGHANISTAN MUST REMAIN A GENUINELY INDEPENDENT COUNTRY.
 RUSSIANS REPLIED THAT USSR IS DOING NOTHING TO INFRINGE
 ON AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE. CHOOSING HIS WORDS CAREFULLY,
 DEO SAID HE RESPONDED TO RUSSIANS THAT SINCE THEY TOLD
 HIM THIS, HE BELIEVED IT. BASED ON THIS BELIEF, HE NOW
 REQUESTED THEM TO AVOID ANY ACTIVITIES WHICH COULD LEAD
 ANYONE TO MISTAKENLY CONCLUDE OTHERWISE. DEO SAID
 THERE HAD BEEN NO RESPONSE TO THIS.

5. DEO SAID SECOND POINT HE HAD MADE TO RUSSIANS WAS THAT GOI DEFINITION OF AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENCE INCLUDED ALLOWING THE AFGHAN PEOPLE TO FREELY SELECT THEIR OWN LEADERSHIP WITHOUT ASSISTANCE FROM ABROAD. SOVIETS RESPONDED THAT THEY WERE NOT INTERFERING IN AFGHAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AS WERE IRAN, PAKISTAN, CHINA AND THE USA. DEO TOLD RUSSIANS THAT GOI TOOK SUCH ACCUSATIONS SERIOUSLY AND WISHED TO EXAMINE HARD EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF THEM. RUSSIANS HAD NEVER RETURNED TO THIS SUBJECT.

6. IN RESPONSE TO PCL COUNSELOR REFERENCE TO SIGNS OF INCREASED SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY NORTH OF THE USSR-AFGHANISTAN BORDER, DEO SAID GOI HAD NO INDEPENDENT MEANS OF CONFIRMING THIS. "WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING HARD EVIDENCE, SUCH AS SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHY OR ELECTRONIC INTERCEPTS, WHICH WE WOULD WISH TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION IN PRUSING OUR POLICY IN SUPPORT OF AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENCE."

7. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT SANGUINE THAT THE GOI UNDER WEAK CARETAKER GOVERNMENT UNTIL END OF THE YEAR ELECTIONS WOULD BE CAPABLE OF AGREEING ON SUCH A DEVISIVE SUBJECT AS REQUESTING THE SOVIET UNION TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN AFGHANISTAN. EVEN IF THE INDIANS DID RAISE THE MATTER THEY MIGHT CHOOSE NOT TO INFORM US. HOWEVER, DEO HAS LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR US TO RETURN TO WHAT IS APPARENTLY ALSO A MATTER OF INTEREST TO THE GOI. PROVIDING EVIDENCE OF SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN REITERATED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN.

COMMENT

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